

# FARMINGTON POLICE DEPARTMENT

## POLICY AND PROCEDURE



**Policy Number:**  
299-05

**Effective Date:**  
05/09/2016

**Subject:**  
Ride-Along Program

**Approved by:**

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "S.D. Hebbe".

**Steven D. Hebbe, Chief of Police**



### PURPOSE:

To establish guidelines governing civilians riding in police vehicles for the purpose of observing the operations of the Farmington Police Department.

### POLICY:

It is the policy of the Farmington Police Department to selectively allow civilians to ride with members of the Patrol Division.

### PROCEDURE:

#### **Ride-Along Eligibility and Restrictions:**

The Ride-Along Program is intended to be an educational process for civilians and is not designed for entertainment purposes. Officers are cautioned to use discretion when requesting permission for relatives or personal friends to ride along with them.

All individuals requesting to ride along must be at least 18 years of age, or an active member of the Farmington Police Explorer Post, or referred by a School Resource Officer. Any exceptions to this must be approved in writing by the Chief of Police or his/ her designee. The following individuals are examples of those that may request permission to ride along:

1. Interested members of the community who can articulate the reason for the request;
2. Persons interested in the law enforcement field who desire first hand exposure to our agency;
3. Those involved in department sponsored courses such as the Citizens Academy, Women Against Crime, the Police Explorer Post, and the Volunteer Observation Patrol;
4. Government Officials;
5. Officers or Dispatchers from other law enforcement agencies;
6. Spouses, relatives and friends of officers;

7. Any others deemed eligible.

Participation in the Ride-Along Program is regulated by guidelines and requirements. Failure to adhere to the following guidelines and requirements may result in the Ride-Along privilege being suspended.

### **Ride-Along Request Procedures:**

All persons desiring to participate in the Ride-Along Program must fill out the Request for Ride-Along form and submit it to the Shift Lieutenant at least five days prior to the requested date for the ride-along. Shift Lieutenants are responsible for approving or denying requests. Short notice exceptions may be considered on a case by case basis. Once the approval or denial has been made, the form is given to the appropriate shift supervisor who will schedule the ride-along or relay the reason for denial.

Attached to the Request for Ride-Along form is a waiver of liability form that must be signed. Should special permission be granted to a person under 18 years of age, that person must have the form signed by the minor's parent(s) or guardian(s).

Members of the Farmington Police Explorer post will maintain a parental waiver form on file with the Explorer Post Advisor. The waiver will be valid for one year. Parents must file a new waiver annually. The explorer will fill out a Request for Ride-Along form and submit it to the Explorer Advisor. The Advisor will act as a liaison between explorer and the requested officer to ensure the requested officer will accept the ride-along. The Advisor will reserve the right to disapprove any ride-along for reasonable cause.

Civilian employees of the Farmington Police Department and San Juan County Communications Authority Dispatchers are not required to fill out the request or waiver forms, but do need approval from the Shift Lieutenant prior to any Ride-Along. Such Ride-Alongs are considered job related and part of their normal job duties.

### **Frequency of Ride-Along Requests:**

No individual will be granted permission for more than two Ride-Alongs within a twelve month period except:

1. Spouses or fiancés may be granted permission to ride up to 3 times per calendar year;
2. Civilian employees of the Farmington Police Department and Dispatch personnel, as determined by their supervisor;
3. Local government officials or other city employees;
4. When necessary to complete an assignment or requirement related to the Ride-Along process;
5. Members of the Farmington Police Explorer Post, who are in good standing, may participate in one Ride-Along per month as approved by the Advisor. The number of explorer Ride-Alongs may be reduced, at any time, at the discretion of the Shift Lieutenant. Every explorer Ride-Along will be limited to six hours.

### **Requirements and Rules:**

Every individual requesting permission to participate in this program is given a copy of the Ride-Along Requirements and Rules along with the Request for Ride-Along forms. Failure to abide by the requirements and rules may result in the denial of permission or removal from the program. The Shift Lieutenant or on-duty Shift Supervisor will make the determination to deny a Ride Along for any perceived violation of this policy. Members of the Farmington Police Explorer Post, will abide by the policies and procedures outlined in the Explorer Post General Orders. Explorers found in violation of the General Orders may lose their Ride-Along privileges.

### **Dress and Grooming Standards:**

1. Participants in the Ride-Along Program must dress and groom themselves in an appropriate and business-like manner. The shift supervisor will determine if the participant's attire and/or grooming are appropriate to ride in a police vehicle and represent the Police Department;
2. Minimum requirements are slacks and a dress shirt for males. Females will wear slacks and blouses. Denim jeans and/or tee shirts are not acceptable for either sex;
3. Males will be clean shaven or will have neatly trimmed beards or mustaches and hair will be neatly groomed;
4. Clothing that advertises any product, business, or organization will not be permitted nor will any sign or symbol that is inflammatory in nature;
5. Any visible tattoos must be reasonably covered or concealed from view;
6. No visible piercing is allowed with the exception of reasonable piercing(s) of the ears for women. This includes gauges or like devices.

Observers in the Ride-Along Program are guests of the Department and shall conduct themselves in an appropriate manner.

### **Duties of Assigned Officer:**

1. Officers that have been assigned a Ride Along will conduct themselves according to the highest of professional standards at all times. Officers will make every effort to properly explain department Policy and Procedure and address any questions they feel are appropriate to the educational process of the ride along;
2. Officers shall not allow Ride Along participants to exit the police unit and enter into any scene that is not secure or which reasonably poses a continued danger;
3. Officers shall not engage in pursuits nor respond to in-progress violent felonies while assigned a Ride Along. In the event that an officer is needed to respond to an in-progress violent felony, by virtue of proximity to the call or the lack of other units, the officer will deposit the Ride Along at the first safe location available to them. Dispatch will be notified of their location and the first available unit, following the emergency, will respond to pick up the Ride Along. **ABSENT A DEFINITIVE, LIFE OR DEATH NEED, WHERE LIVES ARE AT STAKE AND IN WHICH IMMEDIATE ACTION IS LIKELY TO SUCCESSFULLY SAVE THE LIFE OF AN INNOCENT PERSON OR PERSONS,**

POLICE OFFICERS SHALL NOT ENTER A PURSUIT WITH NON-SWORN PERSONNEL IN THE POLICE VEHICLE.

4. Officers shall not allow Ride Along participants to verbally or physically engage with a suspect. In the event that an officer is in need of assistance he may call upon the Ride Along to provide help as he would do of any other citizen. This should be done in only the most exigent of circumstances and when the safety of the assigned officer, or another, is at risk.